

# Animal Health Safeguarding Review



# ***Purpose of the Review:***

Assess the efficacy of the infrastructure, activities, procedures, policies, partnerships and authorities that comprise the existing safeguarding system.

Identify what is and what is not working in the system.

Propose specific recommendations on how to optimize the system.

# ***Safeguarding:***

Safeguarding animal health in the U.S. is an integrated **system for preventing, detecting, and appropriately responding to adverse animal health events.**

(Adverse health events: the real or perceived impacts of diseases, pests, vectors, or toxins on productivity, trade, or public health.)

# ***Objective:***

To complete, through an independent review panel, a **review of the current safeguarding system.**

To **seek efficiency** within the federal government and to improve satisfaction of APHIS constituents.

To **perform outreach efforts** to include stakeholders; individuals or groups with an interest in the safeguarding of American animal resources.

## ***Scope:***

The safeguarding system protects all animals.

There are both international and domestic aspects of the safeguarding system that were reviewed.

The review related to current and potential APHIS roles and responsibilities.

# ***The Review was guided by three overarching questions:***

1. What works well?
2. What needs to be improved and how?
3. What new initiatives would improve the overall safeguarding system?

# ***Safeguarding:***

The key components of safeguarding are:

- 1) International information.
- 2) Exclusion activities.
- 3) Domestic surveillance and detection.
- 4) Response.

# ***International Information:***

**Collection and analysis of data needed for timely decision making** around risk analysis, promulgation of regulations, identification of threats, and trade facilitation.



# ***Exclusion Activities:***

Exclusion activities are carried out overseas and domestically at multiple venues and are designed **to prevent the introduction of diseases, pests and invasive species.**

# ***Domestic Detection and Surveillance:***

- *Detection* includes activities to **identify adverse animal health events not known to occur in the US or in particular regions of the US.**
- *Surveillance* includes activities to **monitor for those adverse animal health events affecting the US animal population.**

# ***Response:***

Response encompasses actions needed to  
**prepare for and address** adverse animal  
health events.

# ***Mechanism:***

The Review was conducted under a cooperative agreement between the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

An APHIS steering committee provided guidance to the NASDA.

# Review Timeline

- ◆ Dec 2000 Initial meeting with NASDA
- ◆ Jan 2000 NASDA Review Panel meeting
- ◆ Feb – June Data Collection
- ◆ June – July Committees draft reports
- ◆ August 15 Draft Executive Summary to APHIS
- ◆ October 15 Final Executive Summary/Full Report to APHIS
- ◆ November 5 Initial implementation meeting

# Data Collection – Site Visits

- ◆ Washington, D.C.

- ◆ Riverdale

- ◆ NVSL

- ◆ CVB

- ◆ CEAH

- ◆ Miami

- ◆ Newburgh

- ◆ Denver

- ◆ Arlington

- ◆ Santa Theresa

- ◆ Pembina

- ◆ Port Elizabeth

- ◆ Long Beach

- ◆ Los Angeles

- ◆ JFK

- ◆ Newark

- ◆ Others

# Data Collection - Interviews

- ◆ APHIS – VS, PPQ, WS, IS, IES, MRP-BS
- ◆ Customs
- ◆ FAS
- ◆ FSIS
- ◆ ARS
- ◆ Representatives from numerous industries
- ◆ Numerous state and university veterinarians



# **Overview of Findings and Recommendations**



# Significant Findings

"This review views the agency's performance as adequate in handling most of its assigned roles, and even heroic in some of its historical efforts to eradicate diseases that have infected U.S. livestock."

# Significant Findings

“However, the review finds the escalation of science, world travel and trade and emerging diseases is essentially overwhelming the resources and facilities of APHIS and other federal and state agencies responsible for animal health.”

# Significant Findings

The review found that though APHIS has surveillance programs designed for specific disease concerns, they need to be integrated into a National Surveillance System.

# Significant Findings

While APHIS is the lead USDA agency in animal disease control, this review makes important recommendations for critically needed research, laboratory upgrading, surveillance and detection, communications, border security, and other detection capabilities that demand the attention of many federal and state agencies, universities, and the livestock and wildlife sectors.

# Significant Findings

## **Research & Development**

USDA, state agencies, and universities must rapidly shift funding into research on animal disease detection, control, prevention and treatment, and emergency response systems, and request Congress to augment research funds in these areas.

# Significant Findings

## **Organizational Structure**

- APHIS needs improved organization and delegation of authority.
- Field offices must be better empowered to respond quickly to animal health problems.
- Staff located at ports of entry should be reorganized to combine the efforts of APHIS' PPQ and VS personnel into a single integrated unit.

# Significant Findings

## **Communication & Education**

The ability to communicate risks and intelligence regarding potential disease outbreaks is essential in this era of rapid transport of goods and people.

# Significant Findings

## **Coordinated Information**

All agencies tasked with inspection of imported goods or international travelers should construct a shared database and communication network that meets the needs of animal disease surveillance both in the U.S. and abroad.



# Common principles

- ◆ Improve communication – both internal and external.
- ◆ Human resources – need to assess staffing needs.
- ◆ Additional funding needed to increase staff, training, infrastructure and facilities.
- ◆ Implement Ames Master Plan on accelerated timeframe.
- ◆ Need VS annual report.
- ◆ Need revised Veterinary Accreditation Program.

# Principles – International Info

- ◆ Improve international animal health information (IAHI) gathering.
- ◆ Establish a sound system of domestic reporting.
- ◆ Expand information gathering at ports.

# Principles – Exclusion

- ◆ Synergy – unified approach at ports.
- ◆ Business practices – decentralize Control & Command.
- ◆ Adequate level of authorities.
- ◆ Funding – appropriated and user fee.
- ◆ Technology – information and inspection.

# Principles – Domestic Surveillance

- ◆ National Surveillance System needed, with a National Surveillance Director position.
- ◆ Surveillance Steering Committee.
- ◆ NSS lead by VS with partnerships.
- ◆ Communication of surveillance results within and outside VS is critical.
- ◆ Expand role of CEAH.
- ◆ Provide research role for VS.

# Principles - Response

- ◆ National response is a cooperative effort of federal, state and industry.
- ◆ Clear lines of authority must be established.
- ◆ Identification and data management systems are essential.
- ◆ Wildlife and exotic management is critical.

# Recommendations

- ◆ Lead cooperative efforts among agencies, industry, and veterinary medicine prevent disease in the US animal population. (106)
- ◆ Upgrade the capability of CVB for the critical role in the surveillance system.(18)
- ◆ Establish a permanent quality assurance unit to validate exclusion efforts (23)
- ◆ Direct CVB to provide improved and expedited response to brokers, port authorities and similar parties. (37)
- ◆ Mount a public information campaign on illegal importation and methods of inspection. (40)
- ◆ Expand risk assessment to be a standard part of all exclusion operations. (47)
- ◆ Increase assistance in diagnostics and control/eradication to foreign countries. (48)

# Recommendations

- ◆ Support inclusion of CVB in future legislative authority. (61)
- ◆ Support greater authority for CVB for testing of illegally imported biologics. (62)
- ◆ Secure improved electronic permitting for imported biological agents and vaccines. (63)
- ◆ Provide resources to permit CVB to secure technologies for timely response to animal health activities. (64)
- ◆ Provide more staffing to CVB which is currently understaffed for their mandate.(65)
- ◆ Enhance FADDL training programs. (68)
- ◆ Direct funding toward establishing the expertise and physical capabilities at state diagnostic laboratories. (74)
- ◆ Maintain CVB jurisdiction over permits for importation and movement of zoonotic pathogens and all biologics that may be produced in animal tissues or fluids. (75)

# Recommendations

- ◆ Disseminate import permit information electronically throughout APHIS. (81)
- ◆ Establish software compatibility with state and industry systems. (82)
- ◆ Ensure that diagnostic and applied research is a critical agency priority. (95)
- ◆ Develop a vaccine strategy for FADs. (112)
- ◆ Develop a support plan that assures adequate emergency supplies are rapidly available to the field. (Similar to HHS Pharmaceutical Stockpile.) (116)
- ◆ Define roles and responsibilities of federal and state laboratories in the national laboratory infrastructure. (118)
- ◆ Implement quality assurance and control system for state and federal laboratories. (119)
- ◆ Reverse the serious erosion of animal health applied research funding. (150)





# **Safeguarding Review Implementation**

# Implementation Committee

◆ Gary Brickler  
co-chair

◆ Sharon Coursey

◆ Randall Crom

◆ Mark Davidson

◆ Jose Diez

◆ Kelly Preston

◆ Paula Henstridge

◆ Valerie Ragan  
co-chair

◆ Rick Hill

◆ Andrea Morgan

◆ Eileen Ostlund

◆ Cindy Smith

◆ Carol Tuszynski

# Recommendations placed in categories relative to issues:

- ◆ National Surveillance System
- ◆ Laboratory Systems
- ◆ Exclusion Activities
- ◆ Coordinated Response
- ◆ Organizational Dynamics/Communication
- ◆ Information Technology
- ◆ Accreditation

# Issue Groups - Critical elements for initial focus

## ◆ **National Surveillance System:**

Recognized there is an extensive framework in place for creating an integrated system, need to go from theoretical to action: a comprehensive surveillance system, to include early detection, and that will meet (or set) international standards.

## ◆ **Lab Systems:**

Move towards Integrated National Laboratory System - defining roles and responsibilities of federal and state participants and ensuring appropriate infrastructure.

## ◆ **Exclusion:**

Ensure adequate infrastructure and coordinate activities between PPQ, VS and IS, and others, to prevent the introduction of adverse animal health events.

## ◆ **Coordinated Response:**

Develop a coordinated approach with dynamic response plans and clear lines of authority.

# Issue Groups - Critical elements for initial focus

## ◆ **Organizational Dynamics/Communication:**

Modify or replace organizational philosophies and human resource policies that have led to staffing shortages, training deficiencies, fragmentation, and ineffective communication.

## ◆ **Information Technology:**

Refocus efforts to meet internal and external customer needs, invest in appropriate technology, and ensure IT resources are adequate.

## ◆ **Accreditation:**

Expedite implementation and administration of new accreditation program.

<b>Issue Group</b>	<b>Implementation Committee Representative</b>	<b>VSMT Representative</b>	<b>Group Leader</b>
<b>National Surveillance System</b>	Valerie Ragan Kelly Preston	Tom Walton	<b>Kevin Cassidy</b>
<b>Laboratory Systems</b>	Eileen Ostlund	Inez Hockaday Lori Anderson	<b>Don Evans</b>
<b>Exclusion</b>	Andrea Morgan Paula Henstridge	Bill Buisch	<b>Roger Odenweller</b>
<b>Coordinated Response</b>	Randall Crom	Rick Hill Associate DAEM	<b>Gary Svetlik</b>
<b>Organizational Dynamics / Communications</b>	Mark Davidson Cindy Smith	Jose Diez	<b>Roxanne Mullaney</b>
<b>Information Technology</b>	Carol Tuszynski	Randall Levings	<b>Terry Taylor</b>
<b>Accreditation</b>	Gary Brickler Sharon Coursey	Jere Dick	<b>Robert DeCarolis</b>

# Timetable for Implementation

- ◆ **February 1:** Issue Group Leaders appointed.
- ◆ **Week of March 18<sup>th</sup>:** Meeting of Implementation Committee, Issue Group Leaders, VSMT.
- ◆ **Week of March 25:** Issue Group Members Confirmed.
- ◆ **April 1 – May 6:** Issue groups review current initiatives, prioritize recommendations.
- ◆ **Week of May 6:** Inaugural Meeting with Issue Groups, VSMT, IC.
- ◆ **May – September:** Meeting of Individual Issue Groups.

# Maximum Benefit from the Report

- ◆ The report provides foundation elements for building the future safeguarding system.
- ◆ VS will utilize the principles as guides in developing system improvements.
- ◆ VS is planning to expand the scope of the principles and recommendations – look beyond daily operations to the systems and dynamics that are the basis of our operations.